A recent survey of healthcare providers found vaccines are a low priority at the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit. More education is needed to overcome patient barriers.

The survey was commissioned by the Alliance for Aging Research to better understand how the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit is being used to promote, track, and educate about vaccines. It was distributed to 200 primary care physicians and nurse practitioners who conduct the Annual Wellness Visit.

The survey found that providers believe a number of barriers keep Medicare patients from getting vaccinated:

- Fear of adverse reactions
- Fear of vaccine side effects like pain
- Belief that the vaccines cause the diseases they are supposed to prevent
- Cost of the vaccines
- Belief that vaccines are harmful

Vaccines are a low priority in Medicare Wellness Visits. The Annual Wellness Visit checklist is not always used. Not all vaccines are available at the provider's office. Not all providers offer the influenza vaccine.

Methodology: This poll was conducted between June 18, 2019 – June 22, 2019 among a national sample of Primary Care Physicians and Nurse Practitioners who see Medicare beneficiaries and conduct Annual Wellness Visits.

More than one-third of providers say they need more vaccine education materials. Almost half of healthcare employers require their employees to get the annual influenza vaccine.

Primary care physicians are more likely than nurse practitioners to use the checklist (64% vs. 42%). Providers in clinical settings are more likely to use the checklist than in hospital settings (63% vs. 47%).

Only 20% of providers discuss the vaccines covered by Medicare Part B (flu, pneumonia, Hep B) for those at risk. 25% do not offer the tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis vaccine (TDAP). 33% do not offer pneumococcal vaccines. 36% do not require the annual influenza vaccine in the healthcare workplace.

Current ailments, general health, past medical history, blood pressure/cholesterol, family history, past medication history, chronic diseases, vaccines, mental acuity.